

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 WELLIN 00821 170439Z
ACTION SS-25

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O 170413Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4967
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANILA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T WELLINGTON 00821

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (MONDALE, WALTER F.)
SUBJECT: PRESS STORY ON VICE PRESIDENT'S TRIP TO PACIFIC
AND SOUTHEAST ASIA

REF: (A) STATE 037056, (B) WELLINGTON 737

1. A NEW ZEALAND PRESS ASSOCIATION (NZPA) REPORT FROM WASHINGTON, DATED FEBRUARY 15 AND PUBLISHED HERE IN THE EVENING EDITIONS FEBRUARY 16, CARRIES A RELATIVELY FULL ACCOUNT OF PLANS FOR THE VICE PRESIDENT'S TRIP. IT ALSO INCLUDES SOME ERRONEOUS AND POSSIBLY TROUBLESOME DETAILS. WHILE THERE HAS BEEN PREVIOUS PRESS SPECULATION ABOUT A MONDALE VISIT, THIS IS THE FIRST PUBLIC CONFIRMATION THAT A VISIT IS DEFINITELY PLANNED.

2. QUOTING "ADMINISTRATION SOURCES," THE NZPA SAYS THAT THE VICE PRESIDENT WILL VISIT NEW ZEALAND, AUSTRALIA, INDONESIA, MALAYSIA, AND THE PHILIPPINES IN THE SECOND WEEK OF APRIL. (NOTE THE SUBSTITUTION OF MALAYSIA FOR THAILAND.) ACCORDING TO NZPA, AN OFFICIAL
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ANNOUNCEMENT IS EXPECTED EARLY NEXT WEEK, WITH THE EXACT DATES TO BE ESTABLISHED WHEN THE VICE PRESIDENT RETURNS FROM A SKI VACATION. THE STORY ADDS A NIGHT TO MR. MONDALE'S STAY IN WELLINGTON, SAYING THAT HE WILL ARRIVE LATE ONE DAY, RELAX THE NEXT, AND HAVE A FULL WORKING SCHEDULE ON THE FINAL DAY OF HIS VISIT BEFORE DEPARTING FOR AUSTRALIA.

3. NZPA ALSO REPORTS THAT THE TRIP IS SEEN IN WASHINGTON AS AN EFFORT BY THE ADMINISTRATION TO DISPEL CONCERNS BY SOME PACIFIC AND ASIAN NATIONS THAT THE U.S. HAS DOWNGRADED ITS RELATIONS WITH THOSE COUNTRIES WHILE CONCENTRATING ON THE MIDDLE EAST, AFRICA, AND THE SOVIET UNION. SELDEN

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NNN

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